GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3213
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2007
CIC IN NORTH- EASTERN REGION
Sarma Dr. Arun Kumar

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

:-

(a) the details of basic services being utilized through Community Information Centres (CICs) in the North-Eastern Region;

(b) whether the Government is considering the permanent absorption of the services of Community Information Centre (CIC) operators to ensure sustained services for the benefit of the rural people;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether these CICs could reach a stage of commercially viable self sustained units as per the original plan of the Ministry;

(e) if so, the status thereof, State-wise;

(f) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(g) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to make them commercially viable?

Answer

MINISTER O F THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS A ND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR.SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a): Community Information Centres (CICs) are providing basic services like Internet browsing, information dissemination, e- mail, training in computer basics, desk top publishing (DTP), and citizen-centric services to the local populace.

(b): No, Sir.

(c): Does not arise.

(d) to (g): Department of Information Technology (DIT) has implemented a scheme in February 2002 for setting up of Community Information Centre (CICs) in the North-East States using Information Technology to accelerate socio-economic development of the region under the economic package announced by the then Prime Minister. To make the CICs self-sustaining, several citizen- centric services have been implemented, training on computer basics including courses offered by DOEACC and IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University) is conducted, and a bouquet of services is provided. CICs have served a social cause of reaching the unreached by integrating this remote region with mainstream.

As per the approval of the Government and MOU (Memorandum o f Understanding) with State Governments, operational control, maintenance and management of CICs was to be handed over to State Governments after completion of five years of project. State Governments have shown inability to take over CICs on account of financial constraints, and lack of revenue generation on account of CICs mostly located in remote hilly areas where a population is sparse. Keeping this in view, DIT has approved a bridging scheme for implementation over a period of 2 years for managing and facilitating the merger of existing CICs into Common Services Centres (CSCs) being established in rural areas across the country though Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) under the National e-Governance Plan.